

science. For the past century, the museum has provided children with opportunities to engage in joyful discovery experiences that instill an appreciation of our world, develop foundational skills, and spark a lifelong love of learning.

The Museum has prided itself on developing exhibits and programs that emphasize hands on engagement and learning through experience. Children use play-based learning activities to spark their natural creativity and curiosity. The exhibits focus on science, culture, environmental awareness, health and fitness, and the arts. Museum educators also develop programs and activities that address literacy, performing arts, science and math, visual arts, cultures, and health and wellness.

Boston Children's Museum is a pioneer in early childhood education and development and works with research partners to gain a deeper understanding of how children learn, and how they develop physically, intellectually, and socio-emotionally. The museum has teamed up with researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to create Play Lab—an exhibit featuring active research in cognitive development. They have also worked with Harvard University on research involving developmental studies and social cognition. Additionally, they have worked with researchers from Boston College to explore the psychology of the arts and children's understanding of emotional development.

I would like to congratulate Carole Charnow, president and chief executive officer, and all the employees at the Boston Children's Museum on receiving the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

For 100 years, their outstanding efforts have inspired lifelong learning for generations of children and have served as a model for the Nation in early childhood education and development. I believe that the Boston Children's Museum will continue to be the best children's museum in the world and I look forward to the innovation and leadership they will deliver over the next 100 years.●

CONGRATULATING JOHN ANTHONY SCIRE

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. John Anthony Scire, who has been awarded the 2013 Dean's Award for Teaching by a Member of the Contingent Faculty of the University of Nevada, Reno. My home State of Nevada is proud and privileged to acknowledge an extraordinary educator and leader.

Since 1993, Dr. John Scire has dedicated himself to the students and faculty of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Nevada, Reno, UNR, as an adjunct professor. His extensive education in areas of international relations, international finance, and political science has prepared him for his

service to the students of UNR. Nevada is fortunate to have such great educational leadership serving the students across our great State.

Prior to working in higher education, Dr. John Scire served nearly three decades in the U.S. military. His work included intelligence, counterintelligence, and psychological warfare operations that were vital to maintaining the national security of our country. Dr. Scire, like all of our military men and women, dedicated his life to serve this great Nation, and I am grateful for his sacrifices.

I want to acknowledge and thank Dr. John Scire for his faithful service to our country, both in the classroom and protecting America. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. John Scire and celebrating the achievements of our Nation's teachers, administrators, and staff who help guide our students to educational excellence.●

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT TIMOTHY HALL

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Sergeant Timothy Hall, an extraordinary Nevadan who sacrificed his well-being in defense of this great Nation. The State of Nevada and the U.S. Army are proud and grateful for his selfless service and dedication to protecting our freedom.

Sergeant Hall put service to his Nation above his personal safety in 2010 when he was deployed to Afghanistan. He was willing to stand up and defend the United States in some of the harshest conditions. Just 6 months into Sergeant Hall's deployment, he was critically wounded in an enemy mortar attack that resulted in the loss of both his legs. Since then, Sergeant Hall has endured more than 60 surgeries and countless hours of rehabilitation.

In Sergeant Hall, I see the values of integrity, service, and excellence that define the brave men and women in our Armed Forces. It is these virtues that will define the rest of his life as he continues to adapt to the civilian world as a disabled veteran in his hometown of Hawthorne, NV. Sergeant Hall is the kind of patriot who, at the end of the day, is a hero that dedicated himself wholly to the most professional fighting force the world has ever known. America is an exceptional nation because of heroes like Sergeant Hall who are dedicated to securing our freedom no matter what the situation, no matter what the challenge.

All of our Nation's service men and women know all too well the price that is paid for freedom. Each and every day, our troops are serving the United States to protect our liberties. They dedicate their lives in service and constantly make grave sacrifices to ensure the safety of our country. For all who served and all who continue to serve, I cannot thank you enough, and you will continue to have my unwavering support.

I ask my colleagues to stand with me in honoring Sergeant Hall's service to our Nation. Let us continue to be mindful of our dedicated service members who fight to protect and preserve the ideals of freedom and democracy.●

RECOGNIZING VIVA FLORIDA 500

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the events taking place in my home State of Florida commemorating five centuries of historic and cultural significance.

Five hundred years ago Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León led an expedition from the island of Puerto Rico in search of new territory for Spain to claim. Ponce de León laid claim to the new territory they found, calling the site La Florida because of the lush floral beauty that he saw. From our beautiful sandy beaches, to our rivers and lakes, to the Everglades in South Florida, our State remains true to Ponce de León's first description.

Ponce de León's landing can be considered the first step in Florida's journey to become a part of our great country. Ponce de León was the first European to land on what is now the continental United States. His landing predates some of the most treasured historical sites and moments in the United States, including the English landing at Jamestown, VA, and the Pilgrims landing at Plymouth, MA.

It is also important to recognize the State of Florida's Native American population during these events. Native Americans inhabited territories in and around Florida prior to Ponce de León's arrival and continue to make a positive contribution to our State and its culture.

Since its founding over five centuries ago, Florida continues to display its rich history by contributing new ideas, culture, and events to the American experience. I am proud to come from a State with a deeply rooted history, and I celebrate the State of Florida's leadership both past and present.

Mr. President, colleagues, please join me in recognizing the State of Florida and its 500th anniversary.●

TRIBUTE TO ANDREW DOWNS

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Andrew Downs who, at age 15, has been named to the first ever National Youth Orchestra of the United States. Andrew is a native of Irondale, AL, and is a sophomore at the Alabama School of Fine Arts. He is the principal bassist for the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra.

The National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America is an initiative of Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute that brings together 120 of the most promising and talented young musicians from across the country to play together across the Nation and the globe. This year marks their inaugural session.